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ESSAYS

ON

IMPORTANT SUBJECTS,

BY THE LATE

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ADVERTISEMENT.

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ESSAY I.

On MIRACLES.

SIR,

I HAVE lately entered into diſpute with a roman catholick, (whom I ſuſpected to be a prieſt) at the deſire and in the preſence of a lady, that he had been long endeavouring to pervert; and having, as I thought, unanſwerably ſhewn the monſtrous abſurdities of the religion he owned, how all its doctrines were ſolely calculated for the advantage of the prieſts, the ruin of people, and the deſtruction of every thing that is good; and that he was no ways able, either from reaſon or ſcripture, to defend any one doctrine wherein he differed from proteſtants: then his next defence was to de-

preciate reaſon, and to ſhew the inſuffi-ciency of ſcripture without human aid and tradition. Upon which, I demonſtratively proved to him, that when he had taken away the only ſtandards by which we could come to a certainty of the truth of the chriſtian religion, it would ſtand upon the ſame foot of evidence with the hea-then ſuperſtitions; which he vainly en-deavoured to refute. And when he found that he made no impreſſion upon the lady he propoſed to convert, his laſt retreat was to Miracles, where he thought him-ſelf impregnably intrenched.

He ſaid, Miracles were the firſt proofs of the jewiſh and chriſtian religions; and that they were as neceſſary now in this age of infidelity, hereſy, and ſchiſm, as they were in the firſt ages of chriſtianity; and the power of effecting them continued ſtill in the romiſh church, and no other, which he offered as an undeniable argu-ment that the ſpirit of God alone inſpired

that church. And when I ſmiled at the impudence of the pretence, he immediately, in a paſſion, bolted out ſeveral abſurd ſtories of Miracles, which he pretended had been lately done by friars and nuns in Spain and Italy, and with a dogmatical air declared, that they were atteſted by ſo many living witneſſes, examined upon oath by perſons of that candour and authority, and recorded with that exactneſs, that it was impoſſible to reject them but upon principles which would deſtroy all Miracles whatſoever.

ALL the objections I could make, ariſing from the improbability of the ſtories themſelves, the partiality of the relators, and the appearing marks of fraud (as that they were done only amongſt themſelves; that thoſe who firſt told them, or afterwards approved them, were not competent witneſſes, having an intereſt in the fraud; and that they were not done in the ſight of thoſe who were

to be converted by them) were wholly loſt upon him: he ſtill inſiſted upon matter of fact; and aſked me, if I refuſed to believe a fact done in my own age, and in a neighbouring country, atteſted by many living witneſſes, and examined and approved in the moſt ſolemn manner, by biſhops and laymen of the firſt character and diſtinction? How could I pretend to believe matters ſaid to be done in diſtant ages and in diſtant countries, liable to all theſe objections, and many more, ariſing from the uncertainty of written tradition, as well in relation to the perſons who wrote it, as the candour and accuracy of tranſcribers, editors, and tranſlators?

To put an end, therefore, to theſe fooliſh pretences and idle legends, I ſhall endeavour, in this paper, to ſhew the nature of Miracles, that none have been performed ſince the firſt ages of chriſtianity, and that they can be a proof of nothing which is againſt virtue and the good of man-

mankind; and, in order to it, ſhall begin with ſhewing the difference between a natural action and a miraculous one. By nature, I mean that ſituation or order God placed things in at the creation, and that motion or operation he gave them to preſerve and continue that order; and this was certainly a Miracle at firſt.

A Miracle, or *actio mirabilis*, is an action to be wondered at; as when God Almighty interpoſes, and by his omnipotent power alters the order he at firſt placed the univerſe in, or enables or empowers other beings to do ſo: but ſome other appearances are Miracles to us, though, properly ſpeaking, they are not ſo in themſelves; as when he has diſpoſed things ſo at the beginning that ſome events ſhall happen but very rarely, and has hid the immediate cauſes of them ſo far from human ſight and enquiry, that we cannot trace them to any ſuperior cauſe but to himſelf alone, and conſequently cannot

avoid believing them to be the immediate productions of his omnipotence. Both theſe muſt appear to be equally Miracles to us, and we cannot diſtinguiſh one from the other without a new revelation, which is alſo a Miracle of the firſt ſort.

But the truth of a Miracle's being done, and the divine authority by which it was done, cannot appear equally to any, as to thoſe who received and ſaw it: for others can have only their words that they did receive or ſee it; and this information will appear more or leſs credible to them, according to the opinion they have of the veracity or judgment of thoſe who tell it, or convey it to them; and this will depend much upon the knowledge they have of the relators, and the means they have and uſe, to acquire that knowledge, which can never give equal evidence to what the perſons received who felt or ſaw it, for they could only be deceived by their ſenſes, which might have been depraved by

ſickneſs, fear, melancholy, or ſurprize; or they might have dreamed without obſerving that they ſlept, or might fancy they ſaw it between ſleeping and waking; but any other perſon that one of them tells it to, has a further chance of being deceived, becauſe he cannot be ſure that the other did not tell him a lye; and if the ſecond tells it to a third, the laſt is ſtill at a greater uncertainty, becauſe either of the other may be deceived themſelves, or may have a deſign to deceive him.

By the ſame reaſon, the further it goes, the uncertainty is ſtill greater, becauſe the more relators there are who receive it one from the other, the more chances there are that ſome of them may miſtake or pervert the ſtory, or make a new one. If the Miracle was ſaid to be done in a former age, and is conveyed down by books, then the uncertainty muſt be yet greater, becauſe theſe books may have been corrupted by fraud, ignorance, or negli-

gence; perhaps, wrong tranſcribed by clerks, perverted by editors, miſtaken by tranſlators; or the books themſelves might have been foiſted upon the world under venerable names, as we ſee many books often are and always have been.

We can only have the authority of thoſe we perſonally know nothing of, that they were wrote by others of whom we know nothing neither; and can have no greater aſſurance of the truth of the matters conveyed in them, than we have of the candour, judgment, or accuracy of thoſe through whoſe hands thoſe things are conveyed to us; and if it does not appear that they had candour, judgment, and accuracy, our belief muſt be proportionable. If thoſe books are tranſlated into other languages, then the ſkill, care, and integrity of the tranſlators, muſt alſo fall under conſideration. If any perſon cannot read or underſtand either of the languages, then he can know no more than

than what other people tell him, and his belief depends upon their honeſty and knowledge; but if any one underſtands one or both the languages, then his belief depends upon his conception of things conveyed in them, in which, experience tells us, that men differ very widely. If thoſe languages have been long dead and out of common uſe, it will be very difficult, in many inſtances, to come at their true meaning; becauſe, the time of ſpeaking, the perſon who ſpoke, his manner of life and education, and many other things, fall into conſideration: language, like every thing elſe in nature, being in perpetual rotation, and conſtantly varying, inſomuch that if two people of the ſame country who lived at ſome hundred of years diſtance, could riſe again, they would not, in many inſtances, underſtand one another.

We are told in ſcripture, that falſe prophets ſhall ariſe and do wonders, which

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ſhall almoſt deceive the elect, but we are forbid to believe them by Chriſt, if they preach any doctrine contrary to his: it is certain they cannot be true Miracles, for then we could not diſbelieve them, without rejecting all Miracles. Therefore it is plain that he meant there would be ſuch impoſtures and juggles carried on by confederacy, that people that were moſt upon their guard, would be liable to be deceived by them, if they did not wholly diſbelieve them. And it ſeems as if he directly levelled at the many forgeries which he foreſaw would be uſed in the church of antichriſt; and therefore he, in effect, told his hearers, that Miracles ſhould ceaſe in the world upon the eſtabliſhment of chriſtianity. They were neceſſary at his firſt coming to make his doctrine received; and all who ſaw them could not but believe them and the doctrine which he taught; and when that was thoroughly eſtabliſhed, there was no further need of them; and we are forbid to believe any,

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how great ſoever they may appear to us, which are brought to prove a contrary religion; and there is no need of any more to prove what is ſo fully proved already.

But, on the contrary, the pretences to them has done great miſchief to the world: the papiſts, as has been ſaid, pretend to have done numerous Miracles in their church, and ſtill pretend to do them; and, as I have ſhewn you in one inſtance, when they are driven out of all other arguments by fair reaſoning, have recourſe to a Miracle-working power amongſt themſelves. And I neither know nor have heard of any other way of anſwering that argument, but by rejecting and wholly diſbelieving it; for if we will enter into the detail, and appeal to human evidence, they can bring ſo many witneſſes and ſo many records, with all Mr. Leſley's four marks, and fourſcore more, if neceſſary, that it will be next to impoſſible that way to diſprove them; and I

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conceive we have nothing left to ſay, but that their witneſſes were deceived or ſuborned, or, ſince their deaths, belied; that their records were forged, or compiled fraudulently; and that all their tranſactions of that kind have been carried on by juggling and confederacy, amongſt thoſe, who gained power and wealth by impoſing upon the ignorance and credulity of the people; and that thoſe few who ſaw the cheat, durſt not oppoſe prieſtly power, ſupported by public authority; and ſo by time, and by being often told, and never contradicted, the Miracles which at firſt were laughed at by many, came to be believed by all, or almoſt all.

I BELIEVE there has been no new religion ever advanced in the world, but the founder of it either pretended to do Miracles, or Miracles were ſaid to be done by him, by his followers, and believed by them; and I do not ſee how they can be diſproved

diſproved by any one who offers Miracles alone for the truth of his own religion, though they are ever ſo well proved. If you tell him that he is impoſed upon, he will certainly retort the ſame upon you, and will prefer the authority of his own anceſtors, and their records, before yours. If you tell him that his prieſts have an intereſt, and get riches and authority by telling the ſtory, he will tell you the ſame. If you tell him that all other nations and ſects who were cotemporary with his founder, laughed at the cheat, and diſbelieved his Miracles, which were related only by his own followers, he will have the ſame anſwer ready; for the Miracles of all religions are denied by all who are not of that religion, or whoſe religion is not founded upon it. If you aſk him to produce a new Miracle to convince preſent diſbelievers, he will aſk the ſame of you; and perhaps tell you, that there are enough done already; and if you will not credit the old ones, you will not believe

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the new. So that I cannot ſee how it is poſſible for any perſon in one church, to convince another of the truth of a Miracle done in it or for it, without concurrent inſpiration from above, which is a new Miracle.

But though the papiſts alone, of all ſects amongſt chriſtians, pretend to the power of doing Miracles, yet all ſects in their turns pretend that Miracles are done for them: there is ſcarce a battle, a plentiful year, a lucky eſcape of a great man, an unexpected recovery from a fit of ſickneſs, or any unuſual phænomenon of nature, but is made a Miracle of by one party or other, and attributed to an immediate interpoſition of providence, which is certainly a Miracle. Eclipſes, meteors, earthquakes, great inundations, great thunder and lightning, and common as well as uncommon appearances of nature, have been in many ages thought to be Miracles, or the ſupernatural productions

of

of intelligent beings; and are thought ſo ſtill by many nations, and by many people in all nations, who do not know the cauſes of them; and ſo are a great variety of actions done by leger-de-main and jugling.

UNDER this great uncertainty of what is a Miracle, and what not, I conceive there can be no way in nature to put mankind enough upon their guard, againſt the numerous frauds, impoſitions, deluſions, and pretences, of enthuſiaſtical impoſtors and pretenders to inſpiration, and the power of doing Miracles, but to convince them that they all ceaſed at the eſtabliſhment of the chriſtian religion; and that all the extraordinary and uncommon phænomena of nature (which muſt ſometimes happen) are the productions of that order and diſpoſition which God gave to it at the beginning. Allow one thing to be a Miracle, and Miracles will be multiplied as faſt as new paſſions, prejudices,

dices, fears or frauds; and I think there can be no poſſible criterion in nature, by which we can diſtinguiſh the ordinary from the extraordinary works of providence.

It can be no criterion that an event happens but ſeldom; for it is undoubtedly poſſible in the nature of things, that an action may happen but once, and yet have a proper cauſe; and we know that ſome comets do not make their revolution in five hundred years, and yet their motions are as regular as thoſe of the ſun and moon. No man can tell what the powers of nature are; and it would appear to us no more a Miracle for a mare to fole a baboon than a colt, if it happened ſo often; or than there is if ſhe now foaled a monſter, as females of all kinds ſometimes do. We are wholly ignorant of the firſt principles of animals, as whether they receive their formation in the womb, or in the body of the male,

and have exiſted from the beginning of the world, and paſſing through the body of the male, are conveyed into the eggs of the female for expanſion; and we cannot be ſure that they may not find other matrixes to bring them to perfection; and have no reaſon to think otherwiſe, than that we do not ſee it; and from any thing that can appear to the contrary, it might have been ſo in the primæval ſtate of the earth, which probably was much more prolific than the preſent.

EXPERIENCE ſhews us, that infinite millions of animals are produced and brought to life by particular winds and ſeaſons, and ſometimes thoſe which have not been obſerved for ages before; but whether they are produced by eggs, which for many years have borne the extremities of heat and cold, or by any other means, we are wholly ignorant. We daily ſee ſtrange mutations of bodies, as graſs and corn into fleſh and blood, fleſh and

blood into earth, and earth into corn and graſs again; wood into ſtone; and water, as it is ſaid, into cryſtal; and theſe things we do not wonder at, becauſe we every day ſee them: but if we ſhould ſee any tranſmutation that we are not uſed to, we are amazed, and ready to think it a Miracle, though it may poſſibly have natural cauſes, which we know nothing of. We have an inſtance in ſcripture of the magicians of Egypt pretending to Miracles, and great ones too; for it certainly appeared to be as great a Miracle to turn a ſtick into a ſerpent, as for one ſerpent to eat another; and it is plain they deceived Pharaoh, who was not convinced by Moſes's ſuperior Miracle, and would not let the children of Iſrael go. This is an undeniable inſtance how great the powers of nature or deluſion are; for the actions of the magicians certainly were not done by the power of God; and we are not told in ſcripture that they were done by the power of demons, as without doubt

we ſhould have been, if that was the caſe; and though we uſe the word magician now to ſignify conjurers, yet then the word ſignified only wiſe-men and philoſophers.

I THINK, therefore, from all which has been before ſaid, that ſo many queſtions will naturally ariſe about the validity of Miracles, what are Miracles, as well as the nature of the proof neceſſary to coerce belief, that I may ſafely ſay, that no evidence of their being done can be ſufficient of itſelf to eſtabliſh any doctrine, or to prove the orthodoxy of any church, and much leſs can they prove the truth of any thing which has a direct tendency to deſtroy righteouſneſs and virtue; and conſequently we muſt look out for ſome other reſting-place, which our Saviour has given us in theſe words, (viz.) *If any man will do the will of God, he will know of the doctrine whether it be of God:* he hath given us all faculties and lights to diſtin-

guiſh natural right from wrong, to know that every man has a right to his own actions, when he does not injure another, and conſequently to the fruits of his invention and induſtry; that every one ought to uſe another as he would be uſed himſelf; that we ought to aſſiſt our neighbours, as we ourſelves would be aſſiſted; that we ought to be grateful to thoſe from whom we have received benefits; and above all, to himſelf, from whom we have received our beings, and every thing we enjoy; and a thouſand pretended revelations, confirmed by as many pretended Miracles, cannot efface theſe plain truths out of minds which are not perverted by fraud or education.

It is a common, as well as an unanſwerable, argument made uſe of againſt the papiſts, when they would perſuade us to believe in tranſubſtantiation, that they deſtroy the evidence they appeal to; for thoſe to whom our Saviour ſpoke, and who ſaw him

him break bread and drink wine, and heard him ſay that they were his body and blood, could have no other evidence but their ears and their eyes; and we can have no more evidence now, that ſuch words are in ſcripture, but our eye-ſight; and we have not only the evidence of thoſe ſenſes, but of all our ſenſes, that there is no tranſmutation of the elements. The ſame may be ſaid in the matter I treat about, *(viz.)* That we have nothing but our reaſon whereby we can know that there is a God; that that God is true, and that he has given revelations to men: and the ſame reaſon tells us, that he is the beſt being in the univerſe; that he cannot act fooliſhly, capriciouſly, or cruelly towards his creatures, nor give ſome of them a power to injure or oppreſs the reſt; and conſequently any revelation to that purpoſe cannot come from him; and that all Miracles which are brought to prove it, are impoſtures.

ESSAY II.

On TREATIES.

SIR,

THE Gothic inſtitution of monarchical government (which by their conqueſts upon the Roman empire was ſettled in moſt parts of Europe) was calculated to give all powers to the crown which were neceſſary to protect and defend the people, and to reſtrain all ſuch powers as could be made uſe of to oppreſs them; but ſince, from the nature of power itſelf, the prince in poſſeſſion, had often, if not always, the means to do one or the other, it therefore intended, by amply providing for the dignity and ſplendour of his throne, and by making him perſonally eaſy,

eaſy, to leave him under no temptation to abuſe his power. All marks of grandeur were heaped upon him, all homage and reſpect paid to his perſon, and all the leſſer errors of government, though dictated by his will, were never ſuppoſed to be done by his authority; but thoſe who did them were anſwerable for them. The laws were called his laws, though made by his ſtates, and he had only a bare liberty of rejecting, without altering them. They were likewiſe ſuppoſed to be executed by him, though he could not determine judicially one ſingle caſe. His equitable conſcience was directed by his keeper or chancellor; his laws were executed by his judges; his fleet commanded by his lord high admiral; and he had a council to adviſe him in ſuch matters of government as depended upon his diſcretion. All theſe were anſwerable, in their ſeveral ſtations, for ſuch defects in the adminiſtration as fell under their cognizance and execution.

In this kind of government, for the moſt part, the king had a power of declaring war and peace, and conſequently of making Treaties about both; but as he could not, in fact, make the firſt, with any hopes of ſucceſs, without the concurrence of his ſtates, who muſt have aſſiſted him to do it, ſo he could not expect any reaſonable effects from the peace and Treaties he made, unleſs theſe too met with the ſame concurrence and approbation; the conſent of the ſtates being often, if not always, neceſſary to enable him to perform them. For if he could have engaged them in wars, and obliged them to ſupport theſe wars with conſtant ſupplies, he had virtually the power of raiſing money; ſince there can be no difference in raiſing it immediately, by a prince's ſingle authority, or of commanding or obliging others to raiſe it for him; the ſame reaſoning is true in relation to the making and executing of Treaties; ſo that in effect, though not in name, the

people were parties to all Treaties which concerned their happineſs and ſecurity. And I ſhall here beg leave to offer my reaſons how far this was eſſential to that form of government. It is certain no wiſe ſtate, or ſcarce any other, would depend upon Treaties, made with a government ſo conſtituted, upon any other foot, and ſuch were ever accounted the king's leagues, and not the people's.

The power committed to one or more perſons to make Treaties, is a truſt given for the public advantage: but if the perſons ſo entruſted, combine with thoſe they negociate with, to betray the intereſt of their principals, or to ſerve any intereſt different from theirs, the ſame is a breach of this high truſt, and void of itſelf, they having no ſuch powers committed to them. If king Charles the firſt had, as he was charged (I hope unjuſtly) entered into a Treaty with the duke of Lorrain, for troops to inſult his people: or, if the

late

late king James had agreed with his brother of France for twenty thouſand men, to bring popery and ſlavery upon us, will any one ſay, that England would have been bound by theſe Treaties made againſt themſelves? If the general of an army is conſtituted a plenipotentiary, with full powers to conclude his principals, and he ſhould ſign a Treaty, by virtue of which, the ſtate he contracts with, is to aſſiſt him in making himſelf prince over his maſters; is this Treaty a valid Treaty?

Such as is the conſtitution of any country, ſuch muſt be all the powers which are derived from it; and conſequently all powers which are inconſiſtent with the nature of it, and which would deſtroy that conſtitution, muſt be void in themſelves. If in old Rome, for inſtance, where the ſovereignty was divided between the lords and commons, the lords had ſigned a league with any foreign ſtate, concerted and intended for their own obvious advan-

tage and ſeparate grandeur, and for the depreſſion, deſtruction, or apparent diſadvantage of the commons; or if their patrician dictators or conſuls had ſigned it; What would the plebeians have ſaid to ſuch a Treaty? Undoubtedly they would have told the authors of it, that they were truſted to make Treaties for the public advantage, and not for their own; and that capital puniſhment was the propereſt recompence for ſuch capital treachery: and probably they would have told the ſtate treated with, that, inſtead of concluding the old war, they had given a juſt provocation for a new, by combining with their ſervants, and corrupting them. Agreeably to this ſpirit, they acted towards thoſe generals of theirs, who, having ſuffered themſelves to be ſurprized and beſet by the enemy, at a paſs, made an ignominious Treaty of peace for themſelves, by which the Roman army was obliged to paſs, diſarmed, under a gallows. The Romans were ſo far from thinking themſelves

ſelves bound by this infamous Treaty, that they delivered up to the enemy the ſhameleſs and cowardly authors of it, and went on with the war, and did juſtice, by this conduct, both to themſelves and their enemies. An example fit for all wiſe nations to follow.

I WOULD not ſurmiſe, that Treaties, which ſeem to be ſolemnly made, ought to be broken upon light pretences. For when proper negociators are fairly choſen, and make uſe of their beſt diſcretion to ſerve their prince and country, and yet are over-reached by the addreſs and ſubtlety of thoſe they negociate with, it would be abſurd to ſay, that a nation ſhould fly off from its engagements upon no better pretence. But if the power of a ſtate ſhould get into hands, that carried all things by caballing, that employed none in its councils or negociations, but ſuch as were pre-engaged to act with them upon any terms; that ſhould afterwards make pocket-leagues, apparently againſt

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the intereſt of that ſtate, or without any view to its intereſt, and then keep them in hugger-mugger, to defend themſelves, and juſtify unwarrantable actions, by producing them upon occaſion: and if this too ſhould happen in a ſtate, ſo conſtituted as before; as for example, in Poland, where all leagues that bind them, ought to be entered upon record, that every perſon whatſoever, at leaſt every perſon truſted with the ſafety of the country, may have ready acceſs to them; and yet thoſe, who made them, ſhould refuſe or decline to ſhew them, or uſe any arts to evade ſhewing them; — I ſay, in ſuch a caſe as this, What ought to be thought of ſuch leagues? Are they to be confirmed, or ought ſuch leagues, and ſuch league-makers, to have another ſort of fate? Ought they to be thought Treaties between nation and nation, or a combination of traitors? And ſhall they make their crime their reaſon and defence; and tell their principals that, becauſe they are made knaviſh-

knaviſhly, they ought therefore to be kept faithfully.

TREATIES are laws of friendſhip, and mutual advantages between nation and nation, whilſt their intereſt continues the ſame, and whilſt the benefits they receive from each other, are greater than the dangers they apprehend; as municipal laws are treaties between ſubject and ſubject, and between magiſtrate and ſubject, for the mutual ſupport and convenience of themſelves and of each other. And as free ſtates make laws for their own, that is, the general advantage; ſo they make public treaties, by the ſame rule, for the public good. Arbitrary princes, indeed, who make laws for themſelves, againſt their ſubjects, make treaties with the ſame view, and keep them private, or make them public, as they think fit; and no other can be expected from thoſe ſort of governors, who live in a ſtate of hoſtility with their own people: but, in a free country,

country, where the meaſures of equity and common ſenſe are obſerved, and where the ſubjects are bound by nothing but known law, it is a monſtrous inſult upon them, a bold denial of their liberty, and robbing them of their birth-right, to involve them in dangerous and chargeable Treaties, of which they know nothing, and from which they can only reap loſſes and expence. This is to execute laws before they are publiſhed, and to draw a nation, by the means of its own power and money, into a ſnare againſt itſelf; it is a ready way to make a nation weak enough, and a government ſtrong enough to ſeize its liberties.

To truſt any perſons with making Treaties, and acting in purſuance of them, without telling what they are, is as abſurd and dangerous as truſting them with great ſums of money, without knowing why; nay, it is much the ſame thing. Every one knows, that one of the greateſt proofs

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and barriers of public liberty, is the people's holding their own purſe, and opening it as they ſee cauſe, for their own protection and ſecurity; but if they give their money blindfold, it may as well, and indeed more probably, be employed againſt them, as for them. Nor is it enough to tell them, that ſuch a ſum is to make good ſuch a Treaty, if they know nothing of that Treaty, or if that Treaty is nothing to them. A court may, with the ſame art and modeſty, aſk them for two millions extraordinary, and tell them it is all for their protection; and then raiſe an army of an hundred thouſand men to protect them accordingly.

THE nature of Treaties, as well as all other laws, calls for their being made public, elſe they look more like Conſpiracies than Treaties; and two courts, under the equivocal and fallacious name of a Treaty, may be engaged, and have been engaged, in black deſigns, to enſlave their

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own people as well as their neighbours; and then indeed they have very great reason for making a very great ſecret of theſe their public tranſactions. But firſt to make a public Treaty, for the good of a nation, and then keep it a ſecret, for fear of the nation, is a contradiction that argues great guilt.

When a Treaty is made evidently for the honour and advantage of a nation, it is evidently for the honour and advantage of thoſe who make it, to render it as public as they can. When men deſerve well of a nation, they do not uſe to be afraid of receiving its thanks; but when they have wronged, ſacrificed, or betrayed it, it is as natural to cover their deeds, as far as they can, with darkneſs. It is certain, nothing concerns a nation more, than to know its own Treaties, by which it muſt reap ſo much good or evil. The pretence of keeping them a ſecret, from foreign nations, is a jeſt, after they are

made, who will have an hundred ways to know them; and to keep them a ſecret from the nation, who is bound by them, and is to execute them, is ſomething for which we cannot find a name bad enough in language. What ſhall we ſay of Treaties, which would coſt a nation ten or twelve millions, for purpoſes, which could never have brought ten groats to that nation; but, on the contrary, very probably, peril? What ſhall we ſay of king Charles the ſecond's Treaties with his brother of France, which ſo aggrandized that haughty monarch, that all Europe could not ſecure themſelves from his uſurpations and deſigns, but at the expence of a war, which has almoſt bankrupt all Europe. Theſe bleſſed Treaties, moſt of them ſecret ones, have coſt England, in particular, near an hundred millions of money, too much of it yet unpaid, but hanging, like a terrible cloud, over our heads, and threatening us with ruin. I hope this dreadful inſtance, ſo well known

to every body, will prove a ſufficient example and warning to us.

If it is the buſineſs of one nation to watch the ſteps and behaviour of another, to be acquainted with its intereſts and views, and to diſcover every Treaty it makes, I think every nation ought, with greater reaſon, to be made acquainted with the Treaties made in its behalf with other nations, and Treaties to be executed at its own expence. Even England has paid very dear for clandeſtine Treaties, and had like to have paid ſtill dearer, even her religion and liberties, for ſecret combinations, or Treaties, made between her governors and thoſe of France and Rome.

A free people, while they truſt their ſervants to propoſe proper Treaties for them, muſt ſtill reſerve a right to themſelves, to judge afterwards whether they are proper Treaties or no, and to receive

or reject them accordingly; and no minister, conſcious of his own duty and innocence, but will ſtand the public judgment; and whoever denies to do ſo, denies his own innocence, and becomes obnoxious to public diſpleaſure and enquiry.

It is therefore the intereſt and duty of every nation, when any amongſt them would draw them into wild and chimerical wars, upon pretence of Treaties made without their knowledge, or againſt their intereſt and conſent, to value them only as waſte paper, and to tell the contractors roundly, that no Treaty can be made in behalf of any ſtate, without taking in the intereſts of that ſtate; and that if it does not, it is *nudum pactum*, a blank Treaty, or rather a conſpiracy againſt that ſtate; that the authors and adviſers ought to be delivered up, or puniſhed at home, and and the partial and treacherous contract declared void.

No country ever did, or ever can, give a power to act againſt the apparent intereſt of that country; and even Treaties, made with the utmoſt circumſpection, and founded upon the beſt reaſons, muſt ceaſe, when thoſe reaſons ceaſe; otherwiſe all treaties muſt ſubſiſt to the end of the world. Treaties may wear out, and die, as well as every thing elſe in nature. If England, for example, enters into a league offenſive and defenſive with Spain, Will any man ſay, that that Treaty ought to ſubſiſt, if France and Italy fall into the hands of Spain? The power and intereſt of empires are perpetually floating; and every Treaty with any of them has this tacit condition annexed to its continuance, namely, that the ſeveral intereſts of each, continue in the ſame ſituation, or, at leaſt, that they be not directly different.

I HAVE heard of a country, where a ſubject grew in great favour and autho-

rity, by rummaging ſucceſsfully for old dead Treaties, amongſt duſt and worms. It ſeems he at laſt found one for his purpoſe, but ſuch a one as neither he, nor any body elſe, durſt adviſe the making of at that time: but I humbly conceive, he and his Treaty ought to have been committed together, to duſt and worms again.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

ESSAY

ESSAY III.

On ELECTIONS.

SIR,

NO ſubject, at preſent, fills the mouths of all parties, and of all men in all parties, ſo much as frequent parliaments, frequent Elections of thoſe parliaments, and to have the Elections free, unbiaſſed, and incorrupt: and, without doubt, the liberty, the happineſs, and ſecurity of all England, as well as every man's private property, depends upon theſe firſt principles of all good government. But it is of no conſequence who are elected, or how they are elected, if the choice, when fairly made, is not to be valid; or if one part of thoſe who are choſen, or perhaps

not choſen, but only returned, ſhall chooſe over again the others: this ſtrikes at the fundamentals of liberty; and, inſtead of calling together the repreſentatives of a free nation, to ſpeak the ſenſe of the whole, and act for their general intereſt, ſubjects their fate to be determined by a cabal, or a party faction, under the direction of the worſt men amongſt them.

All parties, in their turns, have complained of this enormous evil; and I wiſh I could ſay, that all parties too had not given occaſion to this complaint; which, I believe, no party have ever yet found their account in, upon ballancing profit and loſs, or ever will do, unleſs ſuch who intend to oppreſs them all. It is high time, therefore, to put an end to this dreadful and threatning miſchief. Let not the ſound of liberty be profaned any more by thoſe who would deſtroy all liberty. Let us not talk any more about corruption amongſt the inferior part of mankind,

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and the many abuſes ſuffered by it, till the fountains of all juſtice are cleared from corruption. Such as is the ſpring's head, ſuch will be the ſtream which flows from it.

LET us mend ourſelves, and every thing elſe will be mended of courſe: but with what grace can any one complain of want of juſtice, who will do none? Or who, without contempt and indignation, can hear an affected pretender to patriotiſm, hold forth upon public honeſty, or, indeed, any ſort of honeſty; hear him harangue againſt courtiers, ſtock-jobbers, bribery, rapine, or any ſorts of corruption, whilſt he himſelf is undermining the foundations and pillars of ſociety; and, perhaps, for ſome petty and trifling conſideration, will deny to his fellow-member, and to his country, common juſtice, and thereby render juſtice itſelf, (which is the only ſupport of all government)

ment) the tool and lacquey of ambition and knavery.

THIS is an abuſe that few men have owned the defence of, and yet fewer have endeavoured to remedy. But upon the preſumption, or hopes, that the prevailing parties in England, will ſee a neceſſity to unite for their common intereſt, and conſequently do to one another that juſtice, which they hope to receive; I ſhall offer a few thoughts which would influence my own reſolutions, whatever effect they may have upon other people's; and will firſt obſerve, that though no man, or body of men, are, or can be, ſo very great, as to be above governing their actions by the ſtrict and impartial rules of honour and juſtice; yet, in all circumſtances, they are not alike obliged to direct themſelves by the ſame rules of evidence, and of coming at that juſtice.

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THE end of evidence is to know the truth, and whatever will contribute to ſhew the truth, is evidence; though it may be not be legal and regular evidence in inferior courts, which are, and ought to be, tied up by ſtrict and poſitive laws, as well in reſpect of the manner as the reaſons of their judgments; and if any inconvenience ariſes from ſuch reſtrictions, the legiſlature will be at hand to remedy it; whereas, if they were left entirely looſe, it is to be feared they would never ſet bounds to themſelves. There is an odd ſort of maxim in law-books, and in the mouths of many lawyers, viz. *Boni judicis eſt ampliare juriſdictionem*; which in Engliſh, is, That it is the duty of a good judge to uſurp more authority than he has a right to, and than the law gives him.

BUT this is not the caſe of a houſe of commons; for in all circumſtances there muſt be a formal reſource ſomewhere. I confeſs,

confeſs, it appears to me to be a ſoleciſm in politics, in the common determination of property, to place it any where but in the legiſlature; or, which is the ſame thing, in a power accountable to the legiſlature; there cannot be two omnipotent powers in earth, any more than in heaven; and every power which is not ſo, muſt be accountable to that which is; for a court which can judge of laws, by its own authority, and without appeal, or being anſwerable for their judgments, can make laws. I dare ſay his holineſs will aſk no more of the chriſtian world, than to conſent to allow him to be infallible interpreter of ſcripture, and judge of what is ſcripture, and then it will be his own fault if he does not make it a noſe of wax, and to ſignify what he pleaſes.

THEREFORE, I conceive, it would be a blunder in government, to make the houſe of commons the final judges of other men's property; for that would be to make

make part of the legiſlature the whole legiſlature, and would be inconſiſtent with our ſpecies of government; and conſequently, no preſcription could give them a power which would deſtroy the conſtitution they acted under. And though they might, for ſome time, temporize with the people's fears, and manage ſuch a juriſdiction with caution, till it was well eſtabliſhed; yet, from the nature of men, and of power itſelf, our government muſt at laſt centre in a democracy; for all power is of a growing nature, and men will always do what they can do, when they can meet no reſtraints, but what they put upon themſelves.

But however abſurd, and inconſiſtent with our conſtitution, it is for them to be the laſt judges of other men's property, yet they muſt be ſole judges of their own privileges, the orders of their houſe, the legality of their Elections, and the rights of their members to ſit, unleſs they ſub-

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ject themſelves, and their being, to a dependence upon collateral or inferior powers; and as they are unaccountable to any regular authority for their judgments in theſe matters, ſo they are to judge only by the general rules of good ſenſe and honeſty, and by ſuch methods as they preſcribe to themſelves, which is called *lex parliamentaria*. The eſſential and ſeparate privileges each houſe has, as a houſe, muſt be derived from the original conſtitution of our government, and not from poſitive laws made under that conſtitution; for there muſt have been powers qualified to make laws, before laws could be made; and if thoſe powers ſhould abuſe their truſt, and encroach upon one another, there can be no regular authority to determine between them, but they muſt recur to the firſt principles of all government; nor can there be any proviſion againſt this evil in mixt forms of ſovereignty.

A LEGISLATIVE power, therefore, or, which is the ſame thing, a power which is the laſt reſource, and is accountable to no other, muſt act according to diſcretion, though they ought to take eſpecial care that their actions are diſcreet and juſt. To apply this to the juriſdiction of the houſe of commons, over their own members, and, particularly, in relation to Elections, it would be abſurd to ſuppoſe they can be tied to any other rules than good ſenſe and integrity. They have, undoubtedly, a liberty to come at the truth, by all means, which do not intrench upon private men's rights: and ſince ſome people tell us, that they are not allowed to make uſe of the word of God, to deter man from diſobeying God (I confeſs, I cannot tell why) they are the more concerned to think of all other methods by which they can regulate their judgments.

Now

Now it is moſt certain, that a number of concurring circumſtances, tending to prove one point, is a much ſtronger evidence than the affirmation of one or two men, eſpecially when they cannot be ſubjected to the penalties of perjury, in which conſiſts the eſſence and terror of legal perjury; for, without doubt, a ſolemn affirmation is equally binding in conſcience. Every honeſt man's word is his oath, and muſt be made in the preſence of God, whether he declares it ſo or not; and the declaring what every one knows before, does not add to the ſolemnity, unleſs a man wants to be put in mind of it.

'Tis a misfortune to live in an age, when we muſt make uſe of diſtinctions about bribery, which, in any ſhape, muſt appear deteſtable to an honeſt man, even though he ſhould think it neceſſary to his country's ſafety, to make uſe of it; but it muſt be obvious to all mankind, in the preſent corrupt ſtate of boroughs, if any number

number of men have the means of getting money enough, at any price, to bribe the Electors to vote contrary to their inclinations and their duty, and no gentlemen have generoſity and public ſpirit enough, to offer to them proper inducements to make them vote according to them, that one parliament may put an end to the freedom and proſperity of England.

I HOPE ſoon to ſee an end put to this great and enormous grievance, which ſubverts the foundations of all government, and, if not remedied, muſt ſoon cauſe its diſſolution; but till ſomething of this kind can be done by the whole legiſlature effectually, I conceive it to be, in ſome meaſure, in the power of the houſe of commons, to remedy a grievance, under which the greateſt part of the gentlemen of England ſuffer, by being bought out of their neighbouring boroughs, by courtiers, company-men, brokers, or grocers, and ſuch like heroes; many of whom

would find better employment in cheating in the alley, or in their ſhops, than in pretending to govern nations, which they are wholly unqualified to do.

Now, as I have ſaid before, there are many ways to come at the knowledge of theſe corruptions, though poſitive witneſſes are wanting, and which carry in them much ſtronger proof than the affirmation of ſingle perſons. If, for example, a man, whoſe face is not known in any borough, or his name has never been heard of there, but with deteſtation, oppoſes, with ſucceſs, a neighbouring gentleman, of known reputation, character, and intereſt, this is preſumptive bribery, and carries in itſelf much ſtronger evidence than ten poſitive witneſſes; and no honeſt man can lay his hand upon his heart, and ſay that he is not ſatisfied, next to demonſtration, that ſuch a man obtained his Election by bribes or promiſes.

It is ridiculous to expect farther evidence, to prove a thing which proves itself. If a man has no character, credit, or ſuitable fortune, to induce or enable him to get into the houſe of commons, and yet expends a great ſum of money, to obtain a ſeat there, it is plain, that he intends corruption, muſt have uſed corruption, and will endeavour to make his reprizals upon the public. If the money is his own, he will be paid it again, with large intereſt; and, if it is not his own, it is eaſy to know, by knowing his patrons and dependencies, whoſe jobbs he is to ſerve, and who ſet him to work. Aſk, *Cui bono?* that is, who is to receive benefit, beſides himſelf, by his unſeaſonable zeal? and you will know who gave him the money, and for what reaſons he gave it.

I ſhall take the liberty, therefore, to make the ſame diſtinctions here, about bribery, as the lawyers uſe about killing

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a man. If one kills another, unprovoked, it is murther, and the murtherer is hanged. If two quarrel together, and one is ſlain, it is manſlaughter in the ſurvivor, and he is burnt in the hand: but if one man kills another, to prevent his killing him, it is *ſe defendendo*, and the manſlayer is acquitted: So a man, who is guilty of voluntary and unprovoked bribery, ought to be caſt out of the houſe with ſhame and indignation, and the other's Election declared good. If two men engage in a bribing-match, *viz.* who ſhall offer moſt, the Election ought to be void; and neither ought to take advantage of the other's corruption.

But if a country gentleman propoſes to ſtand upon his natural intereſt and merit, in a borough, and, perhaps, is called thither by the voice of the people, and the country round, and yet, if the awe and apprehenſions of his virtue and ſteddy reſolutions, to oppoſe all corruption, ſhall animate

animate and provoke public oppreſſors to oppoſe him, and to bribe the Electors from their inclinations and their intereſt, then, I think, if this gentleman, at his own expence, will endeavour to ſecure an intereſt, which he had, at firſt, without any, and which he ſtill wiſhes to be his, with no other view, but to ſerve his country, and diſappoint thoſe who have no other view but to betray it; I ſay then, if this is bribery, it is bribery *ſe defendendo*; and I ſhall always think myſelf at liberty to call it excuſeable, if not commendable bribery; for it would be a ſtrange ſtory, if any ſet of men ſhould be ſuffered, by outrageous and exorbitant bribery, to drive all the gentlemen of England into great expences, to qualify themſelves to ſerve the public, and hinder others from ruining it, and then to let them take advantage, from thoſe expences, to hinder them from doing ſo.

When Cæſar joined his intereſt with L. Luceius, to obtain the conſulate againſt Bibulus, and was determined to carry it, the only way he could carry it, *viz.* by bribery, the great men and ſenators of Rome, reſolved to oppoſe him with the ſame weapon, as knowing well the deſperate deſigns of that parricide againſt the commonwealth, *Ac plerique pecunias contulerunt, ne Catone quidem abnuente illam largitionem ea republica fieri*, ſays Suetonius. The nobles raiſed large ſums out of their own fortunes, even Cato himſelf contributing his ſhare, to ſerve the republic, and ſave his country.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

ESSAY.

ESSAY IV.

On Controverted Elections.

Sir,

I Mean to conſider, in this paper, one branch of parliamentary juſtice, that of hearing undue returns, and making void unjuſt Elections; and I do it the more chearfully, becauſe the preſent parliament has already given proofs of eminent candour and impartiality that way, beyond any paſt parliament that I can remember.

Committees of Elections have been commonly called committees of Affections; and the members often went to them with

their votes in their mouths, not to hear and be convinced, but to determine. The juſtice of the cauſe, and their own opinion, were out of the queſtion; they found it agreeable to their directors, to turn out one man, right or wrong, and bring in another, by the ſame meaſures; a command, or a nod, or a hint, ſuperſeded their faculties; and their place, or their pay, or their hopes, left them not free agents. I have ſometimes conſidered them as puppets, pulled backwards and forwards, and contrary ways, by a ſtring, guided by a hand which every one knew, though nobody ſaw it; and when I have ſeen them renouncing their underſtanding, and all honeſty, and making flouriſhes, and uttering ſpeeches, which contradicted both, I could not help imagining, that I beheld a great man's hands buſily employed in managing the wires, and governing the motion of the machines. At other times I have compared them to wind-inſtruments, which ſounded, or were

ſilent,

ſilent, juſt as the maſter blowed into them; and have heard them utter at night, the breath with which he had filled and endowed them in the morning. In another view, they have ſeemed to me, a band of armed mercenaries, fighting or retreating, wounding or giving quarter, at the word of command; falling upon friend and foe, without knowing the cauſe of quarrel, venturing their lives and their ſouls for ſo much a day, invading for pay, and beſieging for plunder, and going upon the moſt deſperate attack, for piſtoles and fair promiſes.

THESE gentlemen did not ſeem to know their own value, or rather valued themſelves at no more than they were really worth; a way of judging by no means natural, nor indeed much practiſed. They ſhould have at leaſt capitulated for two or three days of liberty, during a whole ſeſſion of ſervitude, or rather for a propriety in their own ſouls and conſci-

ences, one day in ſeven. It was a confeſſion that a man was little worth, when, in the diſpoſal of himſelf, he muſt either loſe his price, or make no reſerve of body, mind, or integrity, in any inſtance, but go roundly into the chain, and wear it without grumbling. Now it would have been a greater proof of their importance, if they would have preſerved ever ſo ſmall a ſhare of their ſpirit, free for their own uſe, and that of their friends: an independent action, now and then, would have done them credit, and left them at leaſt a pretence to ſay that they were *ſui juris*, and their followers of their own opinion. But to ſell all, even to the very breath that they blowed, and to be ready, at all calls, to ſay, and ſign, and ſwear, and to forſwear, counterſign, and unſay, in ſtrict conformity to the word and politics of the day, was a ſeverer bondage, and much more ſhameful and comprehenſive, than that of the oar; and, in truth, ought to have ended in it.

But,

BUT, with pleaſure I ſay it, we have now a parliament of another ſtamp and genius; a parliament zealous to ſupport the court, without forgetting that they repreſent their country; a neceſſary and reaſonable diſtinction, which all parliaments have not made; but, on the contrary, ſome of them have unnaturally oppreſſed the ſubject, by ſerving the falſe intereſts of the crown, and by tamely complying with its enormous demands.

THIS temperate and impartial ſpirit in this parliament, gives us an agreeable aſſurance, that as in all other things, ſo particularly in the buſineſs of petitions, they will hear equitably, and determine juſtly. They will conſider themſelves in the ſituation of judges, who ought to be diveſted of all paſſions, but for truth and equal juſtice, and come prepared to hear evidence, without a bias to this man's name, or that man's intereſt: or, if there be any partiality, it ought to go no fur-

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ther than wiſhes, that the beſt man may have the beſt cauſe.

WHILE they are examining diſputed Elections, a matter of the greateſt moment is before them; not only the caſes of particular men, and the privileges of particular boroughs, to which, however, all juſtice is due, and every juſt man will do it, but their judgment upon particular men, may affect all men; and their determining the rights of ſingle towns, may eſtabliſh or deſtroy the rights of England.

INJUSTICE is not to be done, even to criminals; and, perhaps, there is more miſchief and danger to be apprehended from doing violence, to an obnoxious man, than to a man perfectly unexceptionable, whom every man will be ready to defend and take part with; but while the moſt, or the beſt, are indifferent how an ill man is uſed, a precedent is made, and a gap is opened, to uſe all men ill. The

worſt

worſt men have a right to be uſed well, in inſtances where they do no ill. A pick-pocket is not to be puniſhed as a rebel; and it is murder in any private man, to kill a murderer, unleſs for ſelf-defence.

For a houſe of commons to expel a man, becauſe ſome, or the moſt, or even all of them, do not like him, would be as manifeſt injuſtice as to take away his life, or his eſtate, which they may think another deſerves better.

It is an alarming precedent of corruption and partiality, to inferior tribunals, to ſee the firſt and the higheſt, act partially, wantonly, and corruptly: and the laws are like to be but negligently executed, or rather ſadly perverted, when thoſe who make them, act againſt them. If bad examples, in the loweſt life, are but too catching and diffuſive, how fatal and univerſal muſt be their influence, when they come from the directors of the public

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in the face of the public? when they who govern all men's actions, do themſelves the moſt abandoned actions; and they who make laws againſt oppreſſion, are, even in their legiſlative capacity, oppreſſors? It is an old obſervation, That when the fountain is muddy, the ſtreams cannot be pure.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

ESSAY

ESSAY V.

On OFFICES and CORRUPTION.

SIR,

IT is a pretty amuſement, in diſcourſes about morality and juſtice, to talk of the virtue of former times, and of the degeneracy and corruption of our own. Such ſpeculations do well fill the mouths of preceptors, and the harangues of orators, and fall, properly, from the pens of poets and eſſay-writers: but wiſe men will know, that mankind are always the ſame in the ſame circumſtances; and, if they are more virtuous in one age, or in one country, than in another, it is owing to the different relations they ſtand in towards each other. It is certain fact, that

in all times, and countries, almoſt every one will purſue what appears to him to be his own intereſt, and make all others ſubſervient to it, if he can. Here, therefore, is the ſingle reaſon of entering into ſociety, which is a common agreement to preſerve mutual intereſts: and if any man, or any number of men, can find ſeparate advantages, in abuſing the reſt of the ſame ſociety, common experience ſhews us that, for the moſt part, they will ever purſue them; and honour, conſcience, and public good, will either ſignify nothing at all, or only what he or they ſhall pleaſe to make them ſignify. Power ſanctifies all meaſures; and as the ſtrongeſt will give the laws of right and wrong, the weakeſt muſt ſubmit to them; and in ſubmitting to them, will, by degrees, think them juſt, or, at leaſt, not dare to ſay the contrary.

LIBERTY was never better underſtood, nor could have more pretended advocates

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for it, than when the Romans loſt theirs: every party had it in their mouths, and were as ready to defend it againſt others, as to take it away themſelves. If accomplifhed oratory, excellent diſcourſes, expreſs laws, and a few bold patriots, could have defended it, it had been defended: but the public treaſure had got into the hands, or under the direction of a few men; and with that treaſure they corrupted ſome, and enſlaved all: and it is fooliſh to hope that men, when they have money enough to give, will not give it for their own advantage, and get others to take it upon their own terms. Cæſar might have held forth long enough, upon the ſervices which he had done to the common-wealth, upon the juſtice of his cauſe, and upon the injuries received from Pompey, if he had not had the plunder of Gaul, and the public money to have backed his pretenſions. He knew himſelf a violent traitor, and therefore bribed every conſiderable man in the city, and

ſenate of Rome, and was every year bribing them, not to call him to an account for his outragious rapine and abuſe of power; and at length having long prepared his way by a courſe of unprecedented corruption and exceſſes, for many years, he laid violent hands at once upon Rome, and the world. There is no argument ſo heavy and convincing as a purſe of gold, which, as blunt as it is, will make its way through towns and aſſemblies, and penetrate into cabinets, and into ſtubborn as well as into tender conſciences.

Laws can ſignify nothing, unleſs they are executed; nor, as I have ſaid once already, will they ever be executed, unleſs thoſe intruſted with them have an intereſt in their execution. People are never the better for having a right, if they cannot come at that right; and they are never to truſt it in the power of thoſe, who have an intereſt to take it away. Who will put a ſword into the hands of a known aſſaſſin,

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and then preach to him againſt the wickedneſs of committing murther? or, what virtuous lady will deliver herſelf into the power of a raviſher, and depend upon her intreaties and tears to avoid violence?

BUT, bleſſed be God, this is not our caſe, for where is there a man amongſt us, who is not an advocate for general liberty? the courtiers mean nothing elſe: the whigs and tories accuſe one another with want of zeal for the publick good, or with not having enough of it; and even the jacobites ſay they mean the ſame thing by endeavouring to bring in the pretender. And ſure, when there is ſo favourable and univerſal a diſpoſition towards liberty, ſafe muſt be the word, and we can be in no danger of loſing ſo precious a jewel, when every party is determined to defend it: and if it ſhould appear, after all, that we are not altogether ſo ſafe, as ſo much virtue ought to make us, we have this com-

fort left, that we are aſſured that theſe ſeveral ſets of patriots will unanimouſly concur in all further meaſures neceſſary to make us ſo.

Theſe meaſures ſhall be the ſubject of this paper. It is certain, that many attempts have been made in former reigns, againſt the liberties of England, but the undertakers went prepoſterouſly to work.

Firſt they would bribe us without pence,
Deceive us without common ſenſe,
And without power enſlave.

Sometimes they hoped to win us with pulpit oratory, and univerſity diſtinction; ſometimes by party animoſities, and by playing theſe parties upon one another: often by the corruptions of Weſtminſter-hall; often by bluſtering and bullying; once or twice by getting together troops without money to pay them; at other

times

times by wheedling us and telling us, it was for our good to be enſlaved, and by calling all thoſe who had no fancy to it, Republicans; and in order to render that ſort of government odious, they chriſtened all deſigns and attempts to make the people happy, and to ſecure the rights they were born to, by the name of a common-wealth, or the ſpirit of a common-wealth: and then, that their hands might not be looked into, whilſt they were playing this worthy game, they have declined to call parliaments for years together; and ſo they thought they might rule unmoleſted.

But all theſe were the doughty ſchemes of ſhallow politicians; for, men will not be long prated, and diſtinguiſhed, and bullied out of their ſenſes and eſtates. Parties will at laſt underſtand one another and unite againſt their common enemies. Judges are tied up to known rules, and, when they tranſgreſs them, cauſe univerſal

reſentment. Impotent threats create only jeſt and laughter: troops will not fight without pay; and they muſt get a ſort of eſtabliſhment, before they will have gallantry enough to force it. Good words will buy no bargains; nor will people think it their intereſt to be undone. The word Common-wealth has been found out to ſignify the common benefit; and the people of England have thought that their own government, when duly adminiſtered, provided better for it, than any other that they knew; and always refuſed to pay any taxes, but what were given by parliament; or paid them ſo unwillingly, that the court was never the better for them, ſince it wanted power to force them effectually. So that all theſe methods have proved ineffectual, and have produced new privileges to the people, and new reſtraints upon their governors, who never undermined the root of liberty, but they made it thrive the better, by jogging and opening the ground, and letting in the ſun

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and refreſhing ſhowers upon its fibres, and by given hints and opportunities to better eſtabliſh it.

But after many vain and fruitleſs efforts, the ax was laid at laſt to the root of the tree. The whole people of England were found too many to be deceived or corrupted, nor could the majority of them be made to conſpire againſt themſelves; but being too many alſo to meet together, and take care of their own affairs, they have been obliged by their conſtitution to truſt the ſame to the honeſty and direction of a few: and it was found much eaſier to corrupt theſe few, than to perſuade, deceive, or frighten all. Our governors, ſome ages ſince, had not found out the ſecret of bribing the people's repreſentatives, with the people's money, nor had they enough of their own to do it; but that diſcovery was reſerved for the reſtoration of king Charles the ſecond, whoſe miniſters made the parliament, their jackalls to hunt

down the lion's prey, only for the picking of the bones. This coſt the court nothing, but got for them a great ſtanding revenue, and frequent and exorbitant ſupplies, a ſmall part of which, theſe worthy patriots had for betraying their principals, even all the people of England; and the reſt was given to the court-ladies, pocketed by the miniſters, or ſpent to keep up troops, and in other projects further to enſlave the people, who paid the whole reckoning, we may be ſure.

It is a great bleſſing to theſe poor nations, that this dreadful practice is not now followed: but ſince human affairs are ſubject to perpetual rotation and everlaſting viciſſitude, we ought to take all advantages in a good reign, to hinder the miſchiefs, which may happen in a bad; and I think I may venture to ſay, that there is no way in nature, to hinder one ſort of men from giving money, and another from taking it, but by letting them have

none

none to give or take; or by appropriating it in ſuch a manner, and annexing ſuch difficulties to the diſpoſal, that no one will dare to offer it, or to take it when 'tis offered; and all who do not hope to get any of it, will certainly, if they have any wit, join in meaſures to hinder others from getting it, who have no more right to expect it, than they themſelves have.

I SHOULD be very glad if gentlemen, better verſed in this ſort of traffick, who have formerly gained great experience in the ſcience of diſpoſing of the publick money uſefully, and at preſent have the ill luck to get none for themſelves, would aſſiſt us under our preſent difficulties, and ſhew the world, that they know how to ſave their country, as well as how to ruin it. But for fear, that we may be ſo unfortunate as not to have the advantage of their ſkill and acquired knowledge, I ſhall offer my own thoughts, for want of better, how, in ſome meaſure, to prevent this great evil.

I HUM-

I HUMBLY propoſe, that all public money hereafter given ſhould be ſtrictly appropriated to the uſes for which it is given, and that a ſtanding committee be regularly appointed (of which no member to have a place, or a penſion) to enquire, whether it has been diſpoſed of accordingly.

NEXT I offer, with all ſubmiſſion, that it be a capital crime, for any perſon to give to a member of the houſe of commons, or for any member to receive, any penſion, gratuity, or reward from the crown, or from any perſon acting under the crown, or the miniſtry, or employed by them, directly or indirectly, unleſs the ſaid penſion, &c. be entered, within ſo many days, in a publick office, (there named) to which every perſon may have reſort; or for any perſon to give or take any office or penſion, in truſt for another, or to pay any part of it to another, without entering the ſame as before; and eve-

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ry perſon diſcovering, and making full proof, to have his pardon, and to hold the ſaid office, ſo purchaſed or procured, *quamdiu ſe bene geſſerit.*

THIRDLY, that it ſhall be capital for any perſon, or perſons, to take a ſum of money, gratuity, or promiſe, in order to obtain, or to uſe their intereſt to obtain, any office, or preferment from the crown, or from any officer or miniſter acting under it, with a proper reward for diſcovery.

WHETHER any thing like this will meet the approbation of wiſer men, I cannot be a competent judge; but I have ſome private reaſons to ſuſpect ſhrewdly, that I have not offered a toothſome expedient: however, ſuch as it is, you have it, and if people will not come into it, we can eaſily gueſs why. And indeed, with my weak underſtanding, I cannot find one reaſon, why any man who deſigns to take

no money, but what he may own, ſhould decline to own it; nor can I ſee how honeſt miniſters can ſuffer by being hindered from doing what they ought not to do. If there ſhould be occaſion to truſt any member of the houſe of commons, with a ſum of money for ſecret ſervices; this proviſion will neither hinder thoſe ſervices, nor diſcover what they are; and if, by diſcovering the perſon employed, there ſhould be any danger of pointing out what he is to do, there are able men enough in the kingdom to be found out without the doors of St. Stephen's chapel; and I dare ſay thoſe within will have employment left for all their honeſt abilities.

In ſhort, there is but one of two things to be done, if ever we ſhould have a corrupt court, and a corrupt miniſtry: the firſt is, to be undone by letting the corruption go on: and the other is, to endeavour to hinder it; and if we will not do the laſt, we muſt ſubmit to the firſt.

BUT ſuppoſe ſome ſhould ſay, For what have we taken all this pains, made all this buſtle, and ſpent all this money? have other people gorged themſelves with delicacies and ſumptuous banquets, and muſt we come at laſt only to the hare's foot, and be forced to make good our promiſes whether we will or not? *Hinc illæ lachrymæ.*

I CONFESS, ſir, I cannot anſwer theſe arguments, and therefore it is high time to conclude.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

ESSAY

ESSAY VI.

On Practicable Men.

SIR,

AMBITIOUS men, when they have any thing to do, will employ in it, ſuch who are fit for it; ſome to flatter, others to frighten; ſome to lie and betray for them in private, others to harangue and defend them in publick. All theſe are a neceſſary ſort of Swiſs, or rather knights of the poſt, without the formality of ſwearing; and accordingly as men are diſpoſed, or not diſpoſed, for theſe laudable employments, they are called Practicable or Impracticable men.

By this rule, he who has a judgment, a ſoul, and a conſcience of his own, is a humouriſt, and unfit for buſineſs; he is an Impracticable Man: but he who has a prudential ſpirit, pliable enough to take the impreſſions of the times, and to ſupport the language and livery of the day, is worth having, or even buying; he is a Practicable Man. Theſe are the men, who, like the inferior actors at the playhouſe, chuſe no parts, but take their parts from the managers, and are politicians, officers, fidlers, orators, poets, and buffoons, at the diſcretion and command of their ſuperiors.

It is indeed to be owned, that ſome men muſt have their knaves, as well as their fools, and that the honeſteſt of them cannot be without them, no more than a ſheriff can be without his hangman. I would only contend, that it is needleſs that all their people, and followers ſhould be knaves, unleſs they themſelves are the greateſt.

greateſt. Why all hangmen, unleſs all their work be hanging work? they ſhall have a neceſſary number of rogues, or if they pleaſe, Practicable Men, and I hope no body will ſay that there is any great want of them. However neceſſary ſmall rogues have formerly been to ſave great rogues; it is certain, that honeſt men are always neceſſary to ſave a nation, whenever the ſaving of a nation happens to be any part of the buſineſs, which is to be done.

I WILL further own, that there are men in the world, men of parts and virtue, utterly unfit to do buſineſs in concert, from a ſpirit of impatience or jealouſy, which never leaves them, and renders them incapable of giving up honeſt points to gain knaviſh ones; a compliance abſolutely neceſſary in the tranſaction of ſome ſorts of affairs. The doing of good, as valuable a thing as it is, will find but few patrons and undertakers, unleſs they find

their

their own good in it, and therefore to engage them to ſerve others, they muſt be allowed to ſerve themſelves; nor would any reaſonable man deny them that advantage; but their ſerving thoſe who employ them, with themſelves, is a condition that every honeſt man ought to exact from them. This is more eminently true, in thoſe whoſe buſineſs and duty it is to ſerve the public; I ſay for ſuch eſpecially, to ſerve themſelves, without ſerving the publick, or at the expence of the public, and to ſacrifice a nation to their own ambition and ſecurity; are ſufficient reaſons to render every man of common honeſty, impracticable to their deſigns. And yet there have been, in former reigns, ſuch men as theſe, that moſt wanted Practicable men of the vileſt ſtamp, who would act for them, without reaſon, or againſt reaſon, or for an ill reaſon; and all men who would not be willing traitors, and ready proſtitutes, were forſooth, Impracticable Men.

Most men are governed by ambition, vanity, avarice, or ſome other appetite; and therefore money, title, pleaſure, and power, will render them Practicable to the terms upon which they are to be had, let the terms be what they will. *No money, no Swiſs*, but any Swiſs for money. Honour is often ſought, and come at by the moſt infamous means; for ſuch is the crookedneſs of the human mind, that honour and honeſty in the mouth of the vileſt man, ſignify no more than the two chief ingredients in his own character; and men generally aſſume as much merit from their being faithful in the greateſt rogueries, as from being faithful in the proper place, and often more.

We rarely meaſure the merits or demerits of men by any other rule, than as they are for us, or againſt us, no matter whether right or wrong; and when one knave calls another a Practicable Man, he means him a complement; as much as to ſay, he

he is one of us, he will ſtick at nothing.

One of theſe Practicable Men has for his conduct but one fixt rule, and that is an implicit, and ready ſubmiſſion to the word of command, and even to the nod of thoſe who give it. He is bound to like and approve every thing that comes from his directors, or is done by them, and muſt help in doing it. He muſt ſign a blank to eſpouſe no opinion; but be ready to entertain all, and to oppoſe all. He is to practice contradictions, and to find reaſons for them, and againſt them, at the word of command: he muſt therefore defend or oppoſe the ſame thing, be it good or bad, if there be occaſion, as there often is. He is to ſacrifice all for hire, his conſcience, time, friendſhip, veracity, health and all; and yet ſtill remains obliged; and perhaps next day, he muſt tread backwards, and ſacrifice all theſe againſt that very thing, for which he ſacrificed them all the day before.

Now any worthy gentleman, who is accompliſhed this way, and can do and undo all theſe things, is in a fair road to get riches, and will keep them, when he gets them, as ſeveral in my time have done. Turnſpits and mill-horſes are very Practicable creatures, and therefore are well fed, and ſeldom turned out of their poſts, till through age they can turn round no longer; and then indeed they are left to contempt or ſtarving, or perhaps knocked on the head, by thoſe whom the poor ſlaves had ſerved ſo faithfully.

One certain mark, among many others, by which one might have known one ſort of theſe Practicable Men, in ſome former reigns, was his violent attachment to the firſt miniſter. With them every uppermoſt man was the greateſt man that ever lived, and perhaps, when he ceaſed to be the uppermoſt, the worſt. When he was in power, he was almoſt omnipotent; and

when

when out of it, was ſcarce endowed with common faculties. A certain very great perſon, formerly loſt a vaſt deal of his bright character by dying, even among thoſe, who while he kept his life and power, gave him the higheſt. I was once viſiting a gentleman in a conſiderable ſtation, when he received the news that this grandee was taken ill. He fetched a deep ſigh and ſaid, that we could better bear the loſs of Scotland or Ireland, than the loſs of that great man: but meeting him in the park three days afterwards, and condoling with him upon the aforeſaid great loſs, he ſhook his head, and ſaid angrily, *it had been happy for this poor nation if he had never lived.* Then he went on to call him names, and to ſay things of him, which, in great tenderneſs to his memory, and in obedience to a judicious reſolution, I forbear to repeat.

NOTHING is a greater jeſt to a Practicable Man, than a concern for the pub-

lic, or even the name of public virtue. This is not ſtrange, but it is extremely provoking. For though it would be downright impudence in theſe Practicable knaves to pretend any zeal for a cauſe which they betray; yet it is ſtill more unpardonable impudence in them, to laugh at that which every man living ought to reverence; and that which every man, who has either religion or common honeſty, and either fears God, or regards man, will reverence; and their doing ſo, is declaring to all the world, that they are worſe than wolves and tigers, and greater enemies to mankind; and it is calling upon mankind to ſpurn them out of ſociety, and out of the world, which cannot ſubſiſt in any manner of felicity, but by preſerving thoſe ſacred bonds of public honeſty, and publick virtue, which theſe profligate traitors ſhew themſelves bent to break, or not to defend.

And yet to ſhew what a creature man is, there have been too many inſtances of men, who were famous for public ſpirit, while they were out of power, and grew more infamous for want of it, when they had no longer any occaſion for it. Nay, ſome of them could hardly hear the word mentioned, without being affronted. But it is too common for men, when their own condition is mended, to grow very eaſy as to the public, about which they were ſo anxious before; and they have often wondered, that people will never be ſatisfied, when they had not one reaſon to be ſatisfied, whatever the ſaid wonderers might have had.

By the ſame means, that men become Practicable to thoſe, whom they hate; boroughs become Practicable to ſuch as they never ſaw. The city knight had nothing to do, but to knock upon the bottom of his hog-trough (by which, I ſuppoſe, he meant his own pocket) and

preſently a whole corporation grew practicable to the ſound.

But there is leſs jeſt than melancholy in the purpoſe, and method of making men Practicable, when they who do ſo, are gone ſo far as to declare (as it is ſaid, ſome of them have, more than once, unwarily but truly declared) that men of virtue, are not the men they want. Such men will not be led blindly, nor act raſhly and wickedly, nor be bought ſlaviſhly, nor driven tamely: but rogues have a price, which they know how to give, and for that price they will bear any burthen, and go any length.

Great men have had often, from cuſtom, figure, and impunity, a ſort of a wrong right to laugh at public ſpirit; but for every little dirty hireling, who will be any man's dog for porridge, to join in the laugh, calls aloud for the whip from every porter in the ſtreet;

ſtreet; unleſs he is protected by thoſe, who muſt either protect their rogues, or they will get nobody to ſerve them.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant

CATO.

ESSAY

ESSAY VII.

On FRUGALITY.

SIR,

PARCIMONIA *magnum eſt vectigal.* A frugal adminiſtration of the publick treaſure is one ſign of a well governed ſtate, which can never be well governed where the publick treaſure is ill adminiſtered. When it is thrown away laviſhly, ill courſes, lying pretences, and oppreſſive methods are generally taken to get more: and as ill practices muſt be ſupported by worſe, that which the people give for their preſervation, will be probably turned to their ruine; and when they have given more than they can ſpare, part of it may be wickedly applied to force them, or to bribe thoſe intruſted with the diſpoſal of their wealth, to give all that remains; and thus a conſpiracy may be formed againſt a country with its own money. Where-

ever

ever, therefore, meaſures are evidently taken in any country, which tend to impoveriſh a people, and to rob them in effect of their property; we may eaſily gueſs what the authors of ſuch meaſures aim at, though they ſwear the contrary till they are black in the face.

When the publick money is not applied as it was intended, what ſecurity can a people have that any other part of the government will be adminiſtered as they intended it ſhould? It is too true that he who does what he pleaſes with the money of a nation, may do what he pleaſes with a nation; and there is all the probability in the world that he who throws away public money will throw away public liberty, which public money was given to preſerve.

The liberty of a country is founded upon the limitations and reſtraints put by it upon it magiſtrates; and no magiſtracy

tracy can be limited without limiting their revenue and expence: as money is the meaſure of every thing, a power that wants no money, need want nothing elſe. Money creates fleets, armies, confederates, dependents, and obedience. Nor is it much alleviation to ſay, that it muſt be aſked before it is given. If whatſoever is aſked is given, and no account is required of the application; ſome of the moſt arbitrary princes in Europe obſerve ſtill the form of calling the ſtates and aſking ſupplies. Thus a very great prince abroad, convenes the ſtates of his ſeveral dominions, and demands a ſupply, which is juſt as much as the courtiers have a mind to, that is to ſay, all that the poor people have without their bellies. A popiſh elector, too, calls occaſionally the ſame ſort of mock parliament, and what he takes from his ſubjects, is forſooth the gifts of the ſtates, who give what they cannot help giving. Nay his highneſs of Moſcovy has lately had a meeting with a

very ſtrange aſſembly in that country, a parliament of Ruſſes, where great civilities paſſed between them and their prince whom they ſaluted emperor.

But nothing of all this is ſo ſhameleſs as was the buſineſs of loan money in king Charles the firſt's time. His miniſtry had not found the parliament ſo complaiſant as others have been, and ſo reſolving to have no more, iſſued a proclamation forbidding people to talk of parliaments, which indeed had made them tremble, by looking into their hands, and taking care of liberty and the nation. They therefore determine to make uſe of their own power and their maſter's name to raiſe money, and took methods ſuitable to ſo worthy a deſign; many illegal, many oppreſſive, *and all ſcandalous*, as my lord Clarendon expreſſes it. One of their methods was that of loan-money, or of obliging every man whom they thought fit to lend them what ſum they thought fit;

fit; and if he refuſed to part with his money againſt law to their banditti, he was ſent to goal. This was called a free gift. The buſineſs of ſhip money was not more modeſt, or leſs arbitrary. Every county in England was to pay them as much money as would build a ſhip; and the money was exacted, and the navy not the better for it.

HERE was money raiſed by violence againſt law and conſent; and the raiſing of money with the conſent of the people and then applying it afterwards contrary to their intention and intereſt, is the next worſt thing. They who have a right to give money, have a right to direct the application of it in general, and in particulars, as far as they can foreſee them. I know but one inſtance in England, where the commons of England ever gave a ſum of money without directing which way it was to go; which example, I hope, will never be repeated. I know not what is high

high treaſon, if miſapplying public money, upon which every thing in every ſtate does ſo manifeſtly depend, be not high treaſon. He who deceives me out of my money, by getting it from me for ſuch a purpoſe, which he mentions and I approve, and afterwards applies it to purpoſes which he does not declare, and which I condemn, does as effectually rob me as if he bound me and took it by force; with this further aggravation, that he adds treachery to plunder; as he does impudence more provoking than all the reſt, if he comes and aſks me for more, or expects to be uſed like a friend by me, whom he has uſed as an enemy.

If a Father allows a ſon ſo much a year to maintain himſelf, and a couple of ſervants; and he throws away that allowance upon miſtreſſes, race-horſes, or gameſters, and comes and deſires more of his father, for that he has ſpent his allowance, without owning upon what, or denying

that it was enough, would ſuch a father be juſtified in giving him any other treatment than that due to a prodigal, and ſtriking him out of his will? I ſhould think the father as mad and inexcuſable as the ſon, if to ſupply the wild and debauched expences of a profligate, he mortgaged from year to year till he had left nothing to mortagage, but was reduced to beggary and a goal.

If a general is truſted with an army for the defence of his country, and throws away his men in mad vagaries of his own; or employs them at home merely to keep up his own power and figure; or abroad to draw foreign powers into a treaſonable confederacy with him; or puts the money given him for the ſupport of his army into his own pocket; or loſes it by gaming, and then comes and deſires more; would not this behaviour of his appear ſuch a mixture of madneſs, impudence, and treaſon,

treaſon, as both entitled him to Bedlam and Newgate?

OR if any man truſted with publick money, for ſuch and ſuch purpoſes expreſsly mentioned, applies none of it, or little of it, towards thoſe purpoſes, and cannot pretend that is not ſufficient for them; and yet comes boldly and aſks for more, without telling what is become of the laſt; is not his guilt, impudence, and phrenzy the ſame with that of the above general, and deſerving as ſevere a fate?

THE ſtate of Athens was ſo ſenſible of the danger of miſapplying public money, that, to prevent it, they made the following awful and noble law; "That "whereas a thouſand talents were aſſigned "yearly for the defence of Athens againſt "foreign invaſions; if any perſon pre-"ſumed to lay out, or but propoſed to

" lay out that money, or any part of it, on " any other deſign, he ſhould ſuffer death." By the law of Athens no free Athenian could be ſent in bonds; and yet they who had embezeled or miſapplied the public money, were excepted out of this law, and denied the benefit of it. It was capital there for any man to enter upon any office or magiſtracy, if he was not able to pay his debts; becauſe they preſumed he would rob the ſtate to pay them: Nor could he ſue for another office, till he had made up his accounts for the laſt; nor till he had done this, was he ſuffered to travel abroad, or to ſell or give away by will any part of his eſtate. So exact were the Athenians about their civil liſt, ſo frugal of the public money, and ſo careful of preſerving liberty, by the only ways it could be preſerved.

THE ſtate of Venice is famous for her Frugality: the magiſtrates, who manage her publick treaſures, are obſerved by ſo many

many eyes, and muſt paſs their accounts before ſo many judges (even as many as there are nobles) that it is impoſſible for them to cheat the publick, with any ſafety. The Doge himſelf has but about three thouſand pounds a year, and ſpends almoſt half of that, at the four great annual feaſts, at which he muſt be preſent; and his children after him, are anſwerable for his adminiſtration. It was therefore natural for the procurator Nani to ſay, as he does in the account of his embaſſy in France, That the French king, if he could, would tax the ſun and the air, and that therefore the people are under unſpeakable calamities from the inſatiableneſs of their governors: but this, ſays Nani, is not the king's fault, but that of his miniſters, who do all the miſchief without him. I ſhall only add here, as to Venice, that the leaſt miſmanagement in the ſtate is unpardonable in the council of ten.

NATIONS, as well as families, are undone by profuſeneſs, and paying their ſervants bills without examination. Is it to be imagined, that a ſteward will not put half, or all of his maſter's eſtate, in his pocket, or waſte it in his pleaſures, if he may? The moſt generous people in the world, whatever they give towards the glory, fortunes, or maggots of their governors, ought, in common ſenſe, to reſerve ſomething for their own ſubſiſtence, and preſervation: it is madneſs to give all away, and worſe to give more than they have; a caſe which, however, is not without a precedent. A nation may give away ſo long and ſo faſt, to ſatisfy the wantonneſs, greedineſs, or ill deſigns of their governors, till in the end they have nothing left for their own defence; or at leaſt ſo little, that enabled by their liberality, their governors may take what remains without aſking.

WORDS cannot expreſs the horrid barbarity of ſtarving a nation to gorge a court. Even every the leaſt tax has ſuch

hard conſequences, that nothing but harder neceſſity, the neceſſity of a country, ſhould create a new one, or continue an old. It is ſomething very mournful and affecting, that in moſt countries, a poor woman, who by hard labour earns eighteen pence, or two ſhillings a week, to maintain herſelf, and perhaps four or five ſmall children, or is maintained at that expence by the charity of others, who can ſcarce maintain themſelves, muſt yet, out of that poor ſum, pay a fifth or a ſixth part towards a tax, which perhaps is applied to maintain idlers and debauchees: that honeſt country-men, with large families and mortgaged eſtates, muſt pay a fourth part of what remains, towards wild expeditions, or penſions paid to intruders, miſtreſſes, tools, and traitors: that young virtuous ladies, of good blood and breeding, muſt marry as they can, far beneath themſelves: that a clan of vultures, beggars and ſtock-jobbers, juſt riſen out of the earth, may mount unnaturally into

coaches and fine equipages: and that honeſt tradeſmen muſt be vigilant and induſtrious in vain, and break without their own fault, becauſe the money of their nation is gone another way; and yet this is often the caſe in enſlaved countries, and eminently ſo in a neighbouring one.

It muſt therefore affect every honeſt and tender heart, when he is raiſing a tax, even the moſt neceſſary tax, to remember, that he is adding to a burthen, which is already breaking the backs of his countrymen. But what a hard and brutiſh ſpirit muſt that man have, who, while his country is gaſping under its many preſſures, can add a freſh one to them, becauſe out of it he is to have a fowl and a bottle; and can for a drunken night, add years of miſery to his country, and to his own poſterity.

Methinks it is worth the while of a government, as it is in the ſecond place, agreeable

agreeable to their duty, to enquire how much a nation is able to pay, and yet continue a nation? If it owes any debts and can pay them, why are they not paid? If it cannot, why ſhould they be increaſed? Why new demands made, and new burthens added? It ſeems but injudicious in any government to make their demands ſo exceſſive, that they cannot come twice. Some ſort of governors are for ſtripping the people at once, and go on, where they have power, till they have left neither money nor people. Such a father of his country, takes all he can, and by all the methods he can. But princes who may be or are ſafe in the affections of their people, (as in all limited monarchies they undoubtedly may be) will loſe much more than they get by ſuch cruel and unreaſonable extortions; ſince it is certain, that more is to be got yearly from a people well uſed, for an hundred years together, than can be got from the ſame people oppreſſed, for five years together. But alas

too many princes and governors, like other men, are governed by preſent appetite.

PROFUSENESS creates want, and want which tempts private men to be knaves, makes publick men oppreſſors: Henry the ſecond, and third of France were good-natured princes, but prodigal and expenſive, and to ſupply themſelves, took all violent and oppreſſive methods to ſqueeze money from their people. We had a prince once amongſt us, who, though he had not ſpirit enough to ſet up openly for lawleſs power, as well as he loved it; yet was laviſh to extremity, and being always in neceſſity, was ever hunting after new reſources for money, and refuſed none that were offered: hence ſo many companies and monopolies to the ruin of trade, and ſo many vexatious proſecutions and arbitrary fines in the ſtar-chamber: the blood-ſuckers who were about him, and conſtantly preying upon him, put him upon preying upon the publick.

THERE

THERE is no end of the miſchiefs of publick prodigality, nor of inſtances which ſhew them. Every nation will find ſufficient cauſes of neceſſary expence, without ſeeking want only after new ones; and it is misfortune enough to a nation to run in debt, and be reduced to great hardſhips for its own preſervation; but for nations to be beggared, mortgaged, pillaged, and undone for Preſter John, or the man in the moon, or for the bleak and bloodleſs provinces of Lapland, and Nova Zembla, is beyond all human patience: and yet great kingdoms have often been exhauſted and ruined, by being forced or deceived by their governors into endleſs wars, about dry titles, barren iſlands, and pitiful towns.

ROME was long famous for an honeſt and frugal management of the publick money, and for a diſintereſted magiſtracy; till both ſenate and people were corrupted with their own money by thoſe,

who

who by that pernicious means enſlaved them; and afterwards they paid a thouſand times more for their oppreſſion, than ever their protection had coſt them. *Ipſa Roma ſui merces erat*; the Romans were bribed and bought with the money of Rome. Whoever reads the 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, and 54th chapters of Suetonius, in the life of Cæſar, will ſee how he came by his power; by what incredible rapine he was enabled to bribe; and with what an amazing profuſion of bribes, he eſcaped the early and legal death of a traitor, which was preparing for him. He corrupted his country with its own money, and oppreſſed it with its own arms.

I AM charmed with a ſaying of Gracchus in the better times of that great ſtate. He had been a great miniſter and governor of Sardinia, and could ſay for himſelf, when he left it; *Zonas quas plenas argenti extuli, eas ex provincia inanes retuli.* "I ſpent my own money in

"my employment, and the coffers "which I carried full thither, I brought "empty back." A rare example, and a precious ſervant in a ſtate! How amiable muſt be the character of ſuch a governor, in the eyes of the governed. There is a good deal of analogy, between a family and a ſtate; and if a gentleman need deſire no other cauſe to turn off his ſteward, than that he will bring no vouchers for his bills; that he finds his eſtate continually waſting under him, and his tenants miſerably uſed, and their hearts eſtranged from him; a prince, who has either his own, or his peoples intereſts to ſerve, need be at no loſs in the like circumſtances, what counſels to purſue.

I am, Sir, &c.

FINIS.

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